



Be bold and try a European city break with a difference

London, April 2018. From beetroot & raspberry ice-cream creations to a wine-growing region you might never have heard of – the following selection of city breaks in Saxony and Thuringia will give you the full flavour of what these German regions have to offer (and it's more than food ...):

“48 hours in ...”: Discover Saxony’s historic urban gems

From A for Annaberg-Buchholz to Z for Zwickau – going beyond visitor favourites Dresden and Leipzig is well worth in Saxony: The region is home to a wealth of historic towns and cities that are yet to be fully discovered by international travellers. On www.visitsaxony.com, the new “48 hours in ...” content hub provides an overview of 13 destinations, including itineraries for a long weekend full of must-sees and things to do. Travellers with more time on their hands can also easily combine different towns in one trip – distances are feasible and easily manageable either by train or rental car:

Try, for instance, Meissen, just outside Dresden, known for the mighty late Gothic Albrechtsburg Castle and the world-famous porcelain. However, this fairy tale town of historic houses and narrow streets also happens to be at the centre of wine-making in Saxony, Germany’s smallest wine-growing region in the Elbe valley. Meissen is located on the Saxon Wine Route and many of the regional wine-growers deliver their crop to the co-operative cellars in Meissen. Wine lovers will delight in the fact that the local wines are rarities and only available in limited quantities: Head to one of the wine taverns and shops located in the surrounding vineyards to sample them and enjoy the gorgeous scenery!

Less than 80 miles further east, the truly European city of Görlitz on the Neisse river stuns visitors with 4,000 historic buildings spanning half a millennium of European architectural history. Or, heading west, Freiberg, a former silver mining town at the foot of the Ore Mountains, is a treasure chest full of beautiful patrician townhouses and, with two Silbermann organs in the local cathedral, a real find for music lovers. For more information on all 13 “48 hours in ...” city breaks in Saxony, click [here](#).

Erfurt, Weimar, Gotha: a trio of inspiring destinations in Thuringia

For your Thuringian city tour, take the regional capital [Erfurt](#) with its medieval city centre as a base for exploring. It sits handily between Gotha in the west and Weimar in the east, with both easy to reach by public transport. Erfurt’s most famous landmarks are the stunning ensemble of St Mary’s Cathedral and Church of St Severus and the Merchants’ Bridge (*Krämerbrücke*) as Europe’s longest inhabited bridge with 32 picturesque houses. A leisurely stroll over the bridge’s cobblestoned narrow roadway is a must. *Krämerbrücke* is a

co-operative, so blissfully free of chains and instead lined with small shops selling craft and art items, cafés (“Mundlandung” is great for breakfast!) and artisan chocolate maker “Goldhelm” who, in summer, also offers a range of homemade ice-creams that are much loved by the locals and include unusual flavours such as beetroot & raspberry. If you want to become part of the Merchants’ Bridge artist community, stay in one of the beautifully furnished holiday apartments in the “[Krämerhaus](#)”.

Less than 15 minutes by train, the small town of [Weimar](#) is home to 16 (!) UNESCO World Heritage sites, including the Classical Weimar and Bauhaus ensembles. In preparation of next year’s 100th anniversary of the Bauhaus art and design movement, founded in Weimar in 1919, a new Bauhaus museum is currently being built. The “Bauhaus in Pictures” exhibition (until 24 June) in the Schiller Museum Weimar provides a glimpse into the life and work of Bauhaus students and teachers in the 1920ies, with images by Bauhaus photographer Erich Consemüller. Tip for a cultural summer break: “[Summer in Weimar](#)” makes the most of the town’s many green spaces, with open-air concerts, music and arts performances from June through to September.

[Gotha](#)’s main draw is the grand 17th century Friedenstein Palace, built by Ernest I, Duke of Saxe-Gotha-Altenburg, whose descendants today occupy the British royal throne. Interesting facts for travellers on the “Royal trail”: The mother of Queen Victoria’s husband Prince Albert was born in Friedenstein and the Palace later became the official residence of their second eldest son Alfred as Duke of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha. The Palace’s English landscape garden is a delight and apart from the impressive Ducal Museum, there’s also the unique sight of the Ekhof Theatre as a completely preserved theatre from the late 17th century.

ENDS

Notes to the editor

General information

The Cultural Heart of Germany, www.cultural-heart-of-germany.com, is a tourism initiative of Saxony Tourism, www.visitsaxony.com, and Thuringia Tourism, www.visit-thuringia.com. The neighbouring states of Saxony and Thuringia feature a unique cultural heritage and rich musical tradition that the Cultural Heart of Germany promotes in the UK.

Travel information:

Easy access to Saxony and Thuringia: All major airlines to Berlin and [Ryanair](#) to Leipzig
New: ICE high-speed rail link cutting travel times from Munich and Nuremberg; Munich-Erfurt 2 hrs 15 min, Nuremberg-Erfurt 1 hr, Munich-Leipzig 3 hrs 15 min, Nuremberg-Leipzig 2 hrs

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